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The Hierarch

A Pointy Hat Sorcerer Lich

"When we think of immortality, many of us think of achieving it through our legacy. Continuing the family line, becoming parents and raising a new generation so that a part of us may live on in them. Hierarchs take that to its extreme conclusion. If their bloodline remains strong, if it passes down from one generation to the next uninterrupted, what lives on is not just their legacy, but themselves.
A Sorcerer who wishes to become a Hierarch has perhaps one of the harshest journeys to achieve lichdom in front of them. A hopeful Hierarch will have to go through a particularly complicated and painful ritual with one goal in mind: to bind their souls to their blood. Hierarchs turn the blood running through their veins into their own phylactery.
The specifics of this ritual differ by blood type and sorcerous magic. It's not uncommon for a Hierarch-to-be to go through it several times, expecting to die during their failed attempts and requesting the help of a cleric to be brought to life so that the sorcerer can try again. The process is arduous, but the fruits of the labor are worth it. Once completed, the Hierarch's blood and soul become one, and then, the true work begins.
The Hierarch will then ensure that their blood is passed on to their descendants. Their children, and their children in turn, will all be living phylacteries to the Hierarch. As long as they live, the Hierarch won't die.
Those descendants enjoy the sorcerous powers of the Hierarch, becoming incredibly powerful spellcasters in their own right, and the Hierarch in turn gains power over them. A Hierarch gives their bloodline a poisoned gift. Anyone with the Hierarch's cursed blood running through their veins is not only the Hierarch's phylactery, but also their puppet. The descendants might be incredibly powerful, but they must all answer to the Hierarch's will, whether they want to or not. This allows the Hierarch to have the power of their entire sorcerous family protecting them.The more descendants there are, the more phylacteries of the Hierarch exist, and the more people there are to defend and enact the Hierarch's will.
But with each generation, the Hierarch's blood becomes thin. The more generations are removed from the Hierarch, the less control the Hierarch has over them, and the less blood they share. After enough generations, the Hierarch loses the strength to retain their physical form, turning into the Hierarch's version of a Demilich, called a Figure Head. Once the last of the Hierarch's descendants that still have the Hierarch's blood coursing through their veins dies, so does the Hierarch. But Hierarchs have fought too hard for immortality to let this stop them. When they feel their powers waning with the passing generations, they start to work on a different, even darker ritual. They select one of their descendants, a particularly powerful one, one with access to great amounts of sorcerous magic. Hierarchs call this descendant their Heir, and pamper them and train them to ensure that their magical abilities grow as strong as possible, almost rivaling theirs. Once the Heir is sufficiently strong, the ritual may commence. The Hierarch sheds their mortal body and possesses the body of the heir, using the phylactery-like blood that runs through the heir's veins as an anchor for their soul. Once the process is complete, the Hierarch's journey begins again as they have gained a new body. They strengthen their bloodline again, ensuring that it passes down the generations, preserving their immortality and gaining the support of a powerful magical lineage that can do nothing but obey their every word. When going against a Hierarch, you go against them and their entire bloodline."

HIERARCH

Medium Undead, Any Alignment

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 263 (31d8 + 124)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	18 (+4)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	21 (+5)

Saving Throws Con +10, Cha +12
Skills Arcana +9, Deception +12, History +9, Intimidation +12, Persuasion +12
Damage Resistances Cold, Necrotic, Poison; Bludgeoning, Piercing, and Slashing from Nonmagical Attacks
Condition Immunities Charmed, Exhaustion, Frightened, Paralyzed, Poisoned
Senses Darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages The languages it knew in life
Challenge 19 (22,000 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +6

Magic Resistance. The Hierarch has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Blood Phylactery. A destroyed Hierarch gains a new body as long as there are any members of its bloodline still alive still acting as its phylacteries. If the Hierarch has 10 or more phylacteries, it takes 1d10 days to reform; If the Hierarch has 5 or more phylacteries, it takes 1d10 weeks to reform; If the Hierarch has fewer than 5 phylacteries, it takes 1d10 months to reform. The new body appears within 5 feet of the phylactery closest to the Hierarch in the family tree.

Spellcasting. The Hierarch casts one of the following spells, requiring no material components and using Charisma as its spellcasting ability (spell save DC 19, +11 to hit with spell attacks):

- At will: *alter self, chill touch, fire bolt, hold person, message*
- 3/day each: *blur, counterspell, fear, hypnotic pattern, scorching ray (cast as a 3rd-level spell)*
- 2/day each: *sleet storm, blight, dominate person*
- 1/day each: *circle of death, disintegration, finger of death*

Metamagic. The Hierarch can manipulate its spells using metamagic. The number of uses of each metamagic option depend on the metamagic option chosen:

- At will: careful spell, subtle spell
- 5/day: distant spell, extended spell
- 3/day: quickened spell, seeking spell, transmuted spell
- 2/day: heightened spell, twinned spell

Family Reunion. The presence of the Hierarch's living phylacteries strengthens it. For each conscious creature within a 10-foot radius of the Hierarch that is one of its phylacteries, the Hierarch gains +1 to its melee and spell attack rolls.

Turn Resistance. The Hierarch has advantage on saving throws against any effect that turns undead.

Actions

Might of the Bloodline. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +11 to hit, range 60 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 10 (3d6) necrotic damage. If either the Hierarch or the target is within 10 feet of one of the Hierarch's phylacteries, the spell damage increases by 1d6.

Reanimate Family. The Hierarch targets the corpse of a creature in its bloodline that has died within the last minute. The corpse rises immediately after as a wight under the Hierarch's control.

Blood Sacrifice. The Hierarch targets a creature in its bloodline and drains their energy. The creature must succeed on a Constitution saving throw (DC 19) or take 3d10 necrotic damage. The Hierarch is then healed for an amount of hit points equal to the damage inflicted and regains one use of a spell or a use of metamagic of the Hierarch's choice.

Legendary Actions

The Hierarch can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The Hierarch regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Cantrip. The Hierarch casts a cantrip.

Might of the Bloodline (Costs 2 Actions). The Hierarch makes one Might of the Bloodline attack.

Reanimate Family (Costs 2 Actions). The Hierarch uses its Reanimate Family ability.

Blood Sacrifice (Costs 2 Actions). The Hierarch uses its Blood Sacrifice ability.

Family Influence (Costs 3 Actions). The Hierarch empowers a member of its family within 30 feet of it. The creature gains a +2 to all its weapon attacks and spell attacks until the end of the creature's next turn.

Lair Actions

On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), the Hierarch can take a lair action to cause one of the following effects; the Hierarch can't use the same effect two rounds in a row.

- The Hierarch controls the spilled blood of its family, covering the floor with a sleek layer of blood, turning it into magical difficult terrain until initiative count 20 on the next round.
- The ancestral lair itself enhances the family's powers. All creatures in the Hierarch's bloodline, including the Hierarch itself, gain +1 to their attacks and saving throws until initiative count 20 on the next round.
- The members of the Hierarch's bloodline are rallied to defend their leader. All creatures in the Hierarch's bloodline, including the Hierarch itself, can move up to their speed immediately without incurring attacks of opportunity.
- The raw sorcerous magic of the Hierarch's bloodline has seeped into the walls and floors of the lair, allowing the Hierarch to manipulate all spells cast within. The Hierarch can apply one of its uses of metamagic to any spell cast within the lair without expending any of the Hierarch's limited uses of metamagic until initiative count 20 on the next round.

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